ICAR Research Benefits to Farmers

1269. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the laboratories under the ICAR have a dismal record of translating their research/development efforts into real on-field inputs for the farmers;

(b) whether the ICAR labs have brought out nearly fourteen new high yielding varieties of seeds but these have not at all reached the farmers;

(c) whether the farmers are now relying more on private sector for their hybrid seed requirements; and

(d) the reasons for ICAR system, with huge manpower and infrastructure, failing to transfer its technology to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) No, Sir. The laboratories under the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) and the Agricultural University System have developed models based on their research efforts into a large number of on-field inputs for the farmers. The Network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) has also been used for conducting pilot demonstrations based on these research based technologies. These efforts have covered Improved varieties, Crop production technologies, Crop protection technologies, Livestock production and management, Aquaculture and mariculture, Farm implements and machinery and Processing and value addition. Extension upto the level of the farmer, however, is the responsibility of the State Government extension agencies.

(b) During 2004, the ICAR and the Agriculture University system has released and notified 165 improved/high yielding varieties of seeds. The ICAR is mandated with the production of Breeder Seed. During 2004-05 about 51,000 Quintals of Breeder Seed was produced which was in turn multiplied by State agencies into 7.00 lakh Quintals of Foundation Seed and 127.40 lakh Quintals of certified/quality seed for making available to the farmers.

(c) The production and distribution of seed, particularly for the food crops continues to be dominated by the public sector.

(d) The main extension system is operated by the State Governments.

In order to facilitate the technology assessment and refinement and its transfer, the ICAR has established a network of 451 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the country till the end of 2004-05. During the period, besides conducting a large number of on-farm trials and frontline demonstrations, 22.36 lakh farmers and extension personnel were benefited through training and other extension activities organized by the KVKs. In addition to 7491 tonnes of seeds, 59.90 lakh seedlings/saplings/livestock strains, produced by the various KVKs were made available to the farmers.

Agricultural growth

†1270. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agricultural growth rate has come down to 1.5 per cent from its desired target of 4 per cent during the last three years since the beginning of the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether it is a fact that necessary and required investment has been constantly decreasing in agricultural sector since 1980 alongwith critical decrease in agricultural research; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to bring desired improvement in agricultural sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) According to the data released by the Central Statistical Organization, the average growth rate in agriculture sector including allied sectors of forestry & logging, and fishing in real terms at (1993-94 prices) during the first three years of the Tenth Five Yeal Plan was 1.2% as against the targeted growth rate of 4%.

(b) Successive Five Year Plans have witnessed a steady decline in public investment (measured in terms of gross capital formation) in real terms in agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fishing. Analysis of trends in public investment in agriculture revealed that it declined in real terms (at 1993-94 prices) from Rs. 35640 crore during the Sixth Plan (1980—85) to Rs. 28793 crore during the Seventh Plan (1985—90) to Rs. 25298 crore during the Ninth Plan (1997—2002). As regards outlay on Agricultural Research and Education, it is categorized

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.